

At the head of the class

University's award-winning educators find venue to trade classroom best practices

SALUTE to teaching

Campus Saint-Jean instructor's dedication to learning garners teaching award

Take your vitamins

An interdisciplinary look back at scurvy finds its way into a medical lab

President sends condolences on passing of Ralph Klein

Folio Staff

University of Alberta President Indira Samarasekera offered condolences on the passing of former Alberta premier Ralph Klein.

"On behalf of the University of Alberta, I would like to extend sympathies to the family, friends and colleagues of former premier Ralph Klein, who died March 29 after a long illness. Ralph Klein's political career extended over 26 years, beginning with his election as mayor of Calgary in 1980. After hosting the highly successful Calgary Olympics, he turned to provincial politics. First elected to the legislature in 1989, he held the office of premier from 1992 to 2006. I became acquainted with Premier Klein after my arrival at the University of Alberta in 2005, during the latter part of his last term in office. In those early days of my presidency and leading into our Centenary celebrations, I came to know him as engaged and interested in the U of A and supportive of our ambitious plans, which had then only recently been outlined in *Dare to Discover*. In particular, his government's re-investment in our vision of interdisciplinary education and research was critical to the development of the National Institute for Nanotechnology, the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy.

"The length of his tenure as leader of Alberta is testament to his oft-noted popular appeal and political pragmatism. Equally important was the fact that he was a dedicated public servant and steadfast champion of both Alberta and Canada. Ralph Klein's distinctive and warm personality may have sadly been quieted in recent years by his illness but his influence and impact will long be remembered within Alberta and Canada."

Out for a canoe



Jordan Bennett, the U of A's indigenous artist-in-residence, marches to ceremonial drums and song as he helps bring home to campus a commemorative canoe April 4. The artifact, which he decorated with tiles and Plexiglas, honours the courage and the loss of Aboriginal children forced into Canada's Indian residential schools. Story page 6.

U of A researchers take two of five Killam Prizes

Michael Brown

Two University of Alberta researchers have been honoured with prizes reserved for Canada's elite researchers.

Lorne Babiuk, U of A vice-president of research and a renowned vaccinologist, and Witold Pedrycz, a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, have each been awarded a Canada Council for the Arts Killam Prize. Only five researchers are selected for the prize each year.

The Killam Prizes are Canada's leading prizes for career achievement in the fields of health sciences, social sciences, engineering, natural sciences and humanities. Winners are each awarded prizes of \$100,000 in recognition of outstanding career achievements.

Babiuk is a leading researcher in infectious diseases, particularly



Witold Pedrycz

zoonotic diseases—those that pass from animals to humans—and is acclaimed for his work in vaccine development. Early in his career, Babiuk devised a new technique to grow the rotavirus, which was costing the cattle industry about \$300 million annually, and then to develop a vaccine to control the virus in calves. His work laid the foundation for a vaccine to protect

children from rotavirus, which, to that point, was killing more than 500,000 children each year.

In addition to his own research track record, Babiuk developed Canada's leading vaccine development centre, the \$140-million Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan. VIDO scientists developed seven vaccines, five being world firsts, including the first genetically engineered vaccine for any animal species. Since joining the U of A in 2007, he has been instrumental in the establishment of the Li Ka Shing Institute of Virology.

With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Grand Challenges program, Babiuk and his team have been able to develop a novel approach to deliver a whooping cough vaccine via the nose—the site of initial infection—without the use of needles. Using the new



Lorne Babiuk

formulation, the magnitude and the quality of the immune response both increased. This approach is now being used to improve other existing vaccines to develop new vaccines against diseases, such as respiratory syncytial virus infection in young children, for which no current vaccine exists.

Continued on page 2

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folio

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Creating a community of award-winning teachers

Michael Brown

The natural progression of pursuing a passion to the ends of the Earth is to seek out others on the same path.

This search is no different for the passionate educators at the University of Alberta.



David Kahane

In accepting the university's 2007 Vargo Chair—awarded to university academic staff who foster excellence in teaching—political science professor David Kahane proposed that he undertake a project to build an informal community for the university's teaching award winners in response to this need to share ideas and passion about teaching at the U of A.

"The university does a good job of celebrating teaching award winners, but nobody asks, 'Tell

me about your teaching; what do you know that you can share with others?'" said Kahane, who also won a 3M National Teaching Fellowship in 2006. "I really yearned for a community of these leading teachers, which could offer different kinds of activities and peer support for [other winners] and others passionate about teaching at the university."

"The group creates a place to help professors understand how their teaching fits into this very complex institution."

David Kahane

What emerged was a group called Teaching Award Winners, or TAW, made up of a mixture of educators from every faculty and discipline who value the opportunity to debate approaches to learning and instruction, and who lend a common voice on important issues concerning university teaching.

Kahane says TAW grows annually as the most recent winners of all major teaching awards—Rutherford Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, William Hardy Alexander Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Provost's Award for Early Achievement of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, the 3M National Teaching Fellowship, the Vargo Chair, the Teaching Unit Award and the Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching—are invited to attend an inaugural social event in their honour, and then connected through a listserv to other TAW events.

"People who win teaching awards put forth passionate work in honing their teaching," says Kahane. "One reason it is valuable to have this group at the U of A is just to bring passionate teachers together to learn from one another."

He says it is also useful to have a body that is coming directly from the grassroots to complement the infrastructure of support the university's administration has built around teaching.

"The group creates a place to help professors understand how their teaching fits into this very complex institution," he said. "It's about getting together with people and talking about what's challenging in their lives, departments and faculties."

Kahane says TAW meets up to three times per year to discuss articles, share ways that each faculty celebrates teaching and learning, and propose ways of responding to and initiating teaching opportunities, such as peer mentorship, workshops and reading groups.

TAW members recently drafted a document of proposed events and activities to support teaching by graduate students, sessional instructors, and beginning and experienced faculty. Through several meetings, the group came up with a list of things that might help uplift the university. One was to create a series in which teaching award winners would be invited to share their experience with other teachers at the university. With the help of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, a new workshop series called "Catalysts: A Conversation Series on Teaching" was created.

There is an upcoming session on April 15 called "Epic Fails: Learning From Our Teaching Mistakes" that will feature Charles Lucy, Olenka Bilash and Kahane. Toni Samek will be the moderator for the panel session. All four are past 3M Teaching Fellowship winners from the U of A. ■

Killams honour pioneers in virology, computational intelligence

Continued from page 1

In 2012, Babiuk received the Canada Gairdner Wightman Award, one of the most prestigious medical science awards in the world. The Gairdner Award is considered a precursor to the Nobel Prize.

"It is a great honour to me personally and to our university to be recognized in this way by one's peers," said Babiuk. "Such an award makes me reflect on the tremendous support of many individuals and organizations throughout my career

that allowed me to pursue my passion. I specifically thank the many individuals who were instrumental in shaping my career."

Pedrycz has made pioneering contributions in the disciplines that form the essence of computational intelligence. These include neurocomputing, which provides a wealth of learning mechanisms, and fuzzy sets, which support human-like reasoning by processing linguistic information. The goal of his research activities is the

development of hybrid intelligent systems that exhibit different levels of learning and are capable of taking the factor of uncertainty (information granularity) into account.

"I feel highly honoured and deeply humbled by the truly remarkable recognition coming from the academic community," said Pedrycz, who was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada in 2012. "I think a lot has been accomplished in this research area but still there are visible and timely challenges—it

is a successful and promising beginning."

He adds that the Canada Killam Prize is a testimony to the high calibre of research carried out at the U of A, "which has indisputably assumed a leadership role on the national and international arena in intelligent systems, computational intelligence and granular computing."

The Killam Prize presentation ceremony will be held April 23 in Ottawa. ■



Bridge over snowmelt waters

Soldiers with the 41 Canadian Engineering Reserves put on a bridge-building demonstration as part of National Engineering and Geosciences Month celebrations March 28.

Water scientists lend expertise to carcinogen study

Bryan Alary

Researchers from the University of Alberta will join a team of North American scientists studying the levels of carcinogenic compounds found in drinking water.

“This study illustrates the complexity of delivering safe drinking water and the role of careful, credible science in developing public policy about water quality and treatment.”

Renée Elio

Xing-Fang Li and Steve Hrudey will lead the U of A team participating in the multi-centre study to investigate the formation of nitrosamines in some 36 water treatment plants in Canada and the United States. Nitrosamines are a class of carcinogenic compounds that may be produced in trace concentrations by disinfecting drinking water.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is currently considering whether to regulate levels of nitrosamines in drinking water. Canada already has water guidelines for N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), the main nitrosamine produced from disinfection.

The U of A research team has extensively studied NDMA and other nitrosamines in Canadian drinking water to increase our understanding of these compounds and help minimize exposure. This new research partnership will significantly advance that work, said

Li, a professor of laboratory medicine and pathology in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry.

“This project is a perfect example of an international collaboration—and multidisciplinary expertise—that will help shape public policy on drinking water quality,” she said.

Li’s team joins the overall project, led by Stuart Krasner of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and co-principal investigator Zia Bukhari at American Water, to identify key factors that contribute to nitrosamine formation, both in treated waste water released into watersheds and in raw water in several Canadian sites.

Nitrosamines are not naturally occurring in water; they are present due to human activity that affects the environment. Concentrations found in drinking water are typically extremely low—far lower than found in some preserved foods.

“The concentration in water is very low, but is that important, and what do we need to do to meet any new regulations?” said Li.

“It’s part of a huge debate.”

The involvement of the U of A in this level of cross-institutional collaboration speaks to the scientific leadership and impact of faculty members who do advanced research on water quality, said Renée Elio, associate vice-president of research.

“This study illustrates the complexity of delivering safe drinking water and the role of careful, credible science in developing public policy about water quality and treatment. Dr. Li, Dr. Hrudey and their colleagues here have exceptional experience in this arena,” Elio said.

The \$712,000 research project is being funded by a \$400,000 grant from the Water Research Foundation with additional funds or in-kind services coming from research partners and participating utilities. ■

Thoughtful feedback appreciated

Indira Samarasekera

President and Vice-Chancellor

the open door

There is little doubt that the last several weeks have been challenging. I would like to thank the University of Alberta community and its broad base of supporters for responding with passionate, thoughtful accounts detailing the value of the work we do here. This week, Mayor Stephen Mandel used his State of the City address to highlight the central role that post-secondary institutions play in the economic, social and cultural life of this city. Last week, our board of governors submitted a letter to the *Edmonton Journal* outlining how important it is to preserve the gains that the U of A has made in enriching student experience, building exceptional research capacity and boosting our international reputation in the past decade. Faculty, staff, student and alumni voices have also been heard in various media—newspaper op-eds, letters to the editor, blog posts and comments, and tweets.

I want to assure the community that while you have seen and heard me speak in media, I, along with many members of senior administration, have also been in continual contact with government to ensure that the nature and benefits of our work within this university are clearly articulated and understood. My message, like yours, is this: the University of Alberta is a strong, vital institution of higher learning that 1) provides the education that students need to succeed as contributing and thoughtful citizens and leaders in every sector of society; 2) engages in research that advances knowledge not only for its own sake, but also often to address specific problems in all disciplines, to help develop sound, evidence-based public policy, and to stimulate commercial innovation; and 3) forms the foundation of creative diversity that is characteristic of all vibrant and resilient cities and communities.

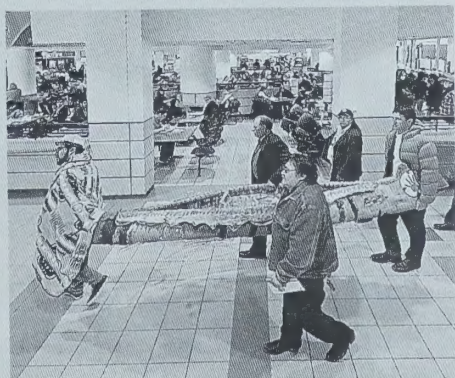
Thank you for all of the feedback received thus far on the letter of expectation. If you have not yet sent your comments, please do so at www.change.ualberta.ca by April 7, so that I will be able to take them into consideration in preparation for the April 11 meeting with government officials and the presidents of Alberta’s post-secondary institutions. ■



Xing-Fang Li is joining a team of North American scientists studying the levels of carcinogenic compounds found in drinking water.

Are You a Winner?

Congratulations to Al Kalantar who won a copy of the award-winning *The Grads Are Playing Tonight!* by M. Ann Hall, U of A professor emeritus in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, courtesy of the U of A Press, as part of Folio’s March 22 “Are You a Winner?” contest. Kalantar identified last issue’s photo as the exterior of the old Arts building. Up for grabs is a Butterdome butter dish. To win it, simply identify where the object pictured is located and email your answer to folio@ualberta.ca by noon on Monday, April 15, and you will be entered into the draw.



FACULTY OF EXTENSION congratulates the winners of the 2013

LIFELONG LEARNING AWARDS



*Outstanding Contributions to the
Learning Environment (Staff)*
MICHELLE ZOLNER

*Outstanding Contributions to the
Learning Environment (Instructor)*
DON MASON

*Excellence in Innovation & Design
for Lifelong Learning*
**HELEN MADILL, STEPHEN KUNTZ,
GLENDA BAKER, & DON MASON**

Lifelong Learning
JESSICA MOFFAT

Research & Scholarship
MARTIN GUARDADO

Excellence in Graduate Studies
LISA PRINS

Enterprise Square to showcase local art and U of A Museums

Folio Staff

University of Alberta Museums will continue to bring the fine arts, sciences and humanities to the heart of downtown Edmonton with the launch of the Enterprise Square Galleries initiative, a three-year pilot project between the university and the city. Exhibition space needs identified by both the Mayor's Arts Visioning Committee and the University of Alberta gave rise to this collaboration.

Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel and U of A Acting Provost Martin Ferguson-Pell jointly made the announcement at an event April 4. The city will contribute \$240,000 per year, starting this year, toward the initiative. The university will provide in-kind fully serviced and operational gallery space, as well as leadership and expertise through its Museums and Collections unit.

Together they see the opportunity to create a lively and authentic hub in the heart of downtown Edmonton that integrates visual arts, culture and heritage in a local context and engages Edmontonians in first-hand activities and learning opportunities.

"Like our entire university community, our museums staff, students and volunteers with diverse interests in the arts, science, technology and business ensure that we

effectively contribute to our great city, our province and the world," said Ferguson-Pell.

The city and the university will be joined by several community stakeholders in this collaboration, including the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Edmonton Arts Council, the Edmonton Heritage Council and the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

A new printmaking exhibit, called *Size Matters: Big Prints From Around the World*, was also launched at the April 4 announcement, showcasing the work of contemporary printmakers from Canada, the United States, Finland, Japan and beyond who all have one thing in common: they like to think big.

Working in media as diverse as woodcuts and digital prints on fabric, the artists featured in this U of A Museums exhibition are making the most of new materials and advances in printing technology to create art of a scale and complexity seldom seen.

The exhibition was born in the mind of U of A curator Jim Corrigan, who has long been intrigued by how print artists have explored scale, not only in the digital age, but historically. More recently, however, innovations in printmaking—materials, techniques and technologies (such as industrial processes, plywood, digital printers and large

paper formats)—have allowed for the expansion of large-scale printmaking.

Size Matters features 56 prints by 34 artists, 45 of them from the U of A's art collection. The largest print, Karen Dugas's *The Renaissance Series: The Classroom*, is almost five metres long.

The exhibition runs from April 4 to July 29 in the Enterprise Square Galleries downtown. Hours are noon to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

"Like our entire university community, our museums staff, students and volunteers ensure that we effectively contribute to our great city, our province and the world."

Martin Ferguson-Pell

Getting your workspace 'green' certified

Michael Brown

For the "greening" of the University of Alberta to take the next step, the sustainability work of individuals must become the work of the collective.

To that end, earlier this year the Office of Sustainability unveiled its Green Spaces Certification program.

This three-level, voluntary certification process encourages individuals and groups on campus to adopt sustainable practices and green their operations. Currently, units have the opportunity to certify offices and events.

Emily Dietrich, program lead in the Office of Sustainability, says those looking to have an office Green Certified, for example,

will be given a checklist of 50 sustainable actions under several main categories including transportation, food and beverage, purchasing, meetings and small events, buildings and work space, participation and innovations.

"Generally speaking they are not actions that are out of reach—they are actions that every one of us can do," she said of items that range from purchasing recycled-content paper to handling waste goods properly. "It's more about being intentional about what we are doing."

She says what makes this program distinctive from programs at other institutions is its participation category.

"The green spaces program is designed to be used as an agent of change, and one of the only ways to achieve change is to get people's participation and their commitment," said Dietrich. "Part of certification is a commitment to bring up sustainability throughout the year."

"We think this program will have more effect than just one person filling out the checklist."

Once the checklist is completed, areas will become recognized as a



The Facilities and Operations Shared Services – Administration office received a silver rating from the Office of Sustainability's Green Spaces Certification program.

Green Space with Bronze, Silver, or Green and Gold certification.

To ascend to the level of green and gold, Dietrich says, participants need to show a little innovation. "We want participants to ask what they can do that is separate, distinct or unique to advance sustainability—whether social, economic or environmental sustainability."

Dietrich notes this program is an excellent way for people to get involved in greening the campus.

"The great thing about green spaces is it consolidates some basic actions that people know about and think about into one space, and also gives them resources to make that happen," she said. "We're in a climate where we are all looking to be more efficient. Some of the actions that we can engage in can save our unit, faculty or department dollars by decreasing consumption."

For more information, go to sustainability.ualberta.ca/greenspaces.

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A masterclass in Indian classical music

Grammy award winner and Indian classical musician, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, playing and demonstrating his Mohan Veena, a slide guitar he created, to faculty and staff at Folkways Alive! April 3.

Saluting a teacher's singular dedication

Michael Brown

If students can stomach the first 10 minutes of the second class of first-year Anglais at Campus Saint-Jean, they are in for an introduction to university life they'll be sad to see go when it's over.

But in those first 10 minutes, Dalbir Sehmy's normally fresh-from-high-school group get the fright of their academic lives as he gives them a crash course in stress.

"At the beginning of the year I surprise the class with an essay test due by the end of class," said Sehmy. "You can see the students get very freaked out—I even go as far as handing out exam booklets."

He then asks them to write down how they feel at that moment. Sehmy soon relents, informing the

class that the essay is just a ploy to invoke feelings of stress.

"I get them to address that this stress is a factor in how they will now perform. That's one of the things we deal with—how you cope with the stress, what methods you can use," said Sehmy, who will receive a Students' Union Award for Leadership in Undergraduate Teaching, or SALUTE award, on March 25. "Sometimes you are more capable than the test will reveal because you have performance anxiety. There is a special skill involved, and we try to address that skill."

Addressing how individuals cope with stress gets at the core of Sehmy's teaching philosophy, which is to make the student experience as individual-oriented as possible.

He says it starts with a commitment to meet with every student on an individual basis at least once in the semester. It is followed by a singular dedication to marking that goes beyond GPA.

"They write an essay and I give them feedback as far as where they are as a mark, but they have to rewrite it with my feedback, and then I re-mark the paper and that's the mark that sticks," says Sehmy, who began teaching at the U of A as an English and film studies grad student in 2000 before coming on as a sessional at Campus Saint-Jean in 2008. "I find that to be very helpful because students find it hard to transition from high school to university—it's a different level of writing, a different level of competition."

"I think it also forces them to think of their writing, forces them to think of themselves as authors."

Emerson Csorba, who nominated his former Anglais instructor for the SALUTE award, says he remembers arriving at the university as a fairly competent writer, but was shaped into something much better during the period of one year.

"I was amazed at Dalbir's commitment to empowering every student in the class, and to this day I remember much of the advice provided in his individualized progress letters for the students in



Dalbir Sehmy won a 2013 Students' Union Award for Leadership in Undergraduate Teaching March 25.

his class," he said. "I credit Dalbir for much of the enjoyment that I draw from writing, and for viewing learning as something that is not work, but something that we should be grateful for."

Sehmy's own appreciation for education comes from a grandmother he never met, whose respect for education has filtered through the generations.

"She would tell my father, 'People can take away everything from you, but they can't take away your education,'" said Sehmy. "My grandmother, who would have lost everything during different times, would say learning is a type of change that takes some amount

of courage. Despite what you lose, you have your own skills, your own abilities, your own capability of learning and your own learning. That's been a big motivation for me, and I try to remember that and give that kind of attention to my students."

To that end, instead of the academic maxim "publish or perish," Sehmy says educators need to add in the words "teach and cherish."

"We can publish, we can teach and we can cherish our whole learning experience," said Sehmy.

"If we remember values, work hard, cherish each other and the value of education, that will push us through difficult times." ■

Professor teaches and mentors dental hygienists in communities across Alberta

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry Staff

Sharon Compton's classroom is bigger than the university's largest lecture hall. The winner of the 2013 W.W. Wood Award for excellence in dental education teaches and mentors dental hygiene students in communities across Alberta through online distance learning. These students are practising dental hygienists who are completing their degrees while working in communities like Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Olds, Airdrie and other smaller centres.

Compton, associate chair and director of the dental hygiene program in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, recently shifted her teaching away from the classroom to distance delivery.

"It's a very different way of educating," she notes. "This method of teaching can be challenging to make connections with the students online. 'But I believe that through consistent and frequent online interactions, providing pertinent feedback as students progress through the course, connection can be achieved.'"

Mentorship and role modelling are key to success for 2013 W.W. Wood Award winner Sharon Compton.

The Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry clearly agrees, naming Compton as a recipient of its W.W. Wood Award, given annually to one member of each Canadian dentistry faculty.

"Sharon's immense work and guidance in the dental hygiene program goes far beyond our department," says Carlos Flores-Mir, associate professor and head of the Division of Orthodontics. "She's raised the profile of the program through her leadership, teaching and incredible commitment to foster dedicated professionals."

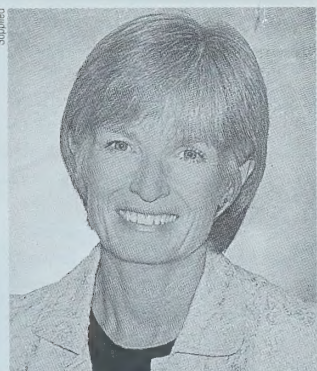
Compton began her teaching career in 1984 as a clinical instructor in the dental hygiene program. In July of 1990, she accepted a full-time tenure stream academic appointment. Her teaching responsibilities included senior clinical co-ordination and teaching, ethics and professional practice, and medical emergencies.

In 1996, Compton decided to pursue a PhD program while teaching part-time. After completing her PhD in 2002, she accepted the position of director of the dental hygiene program in September 2002, a position she still holds today, along with the role of associate chair of dental hygiene.

"Dr. Compton has been a mentor for me, and more recently, I had the privilege of Dr. Compton supervising my master's degree," said registered dental hygienist Richelle Beesley. "She has encouraged me to reach high standards, and always inspired me throughout my research and academic journey."

"Sharon is a thoughtful educator," says Paul Major, chair of the School of Dentistry and senior associate dean of the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry. "She holds her students to a high level of superiority, and has a strong commitment to educational excellence."

"I want to instil in students a deep sense of quality work and practice ethic, and part of this development process begins with setting an example through role modelling," says Compton. ■



Developing well-rounded citizens helps dentist win national teaching award

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry Staff

When small-town dentist Steve Patterson wasn't shuttling one of his six kids to sports practice, piano lessons, or dance recitals, he was in Edmonton working hard to teach dental students to be more than just dentists.

"Steve works incredibly hard to ensure that we are graduating well-rounded dentists, who are not just academically strong and clinically competent, but also professionally responsible and socially aware," says colleague Anthea Senior, clinical assistant professor of radiology.

That commitment to society has helped earn Patterson, associate chair of academic affairs at the U of A's School of Dentistry, the 2013 Bisco National Dental Teaching Award from the Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry. The award is presented annually to an outstanding teacher at a Canadian dental school.

"Dr. Patterson is one of those professors who inspires his students to be passionate about their field, and want to better their society," says Linda Lan, a member of the class of 2015 and one of the many future dentists Patterson has helped train. Students consistently identify Patterson as one of the best teachers in the School of Dentistry.

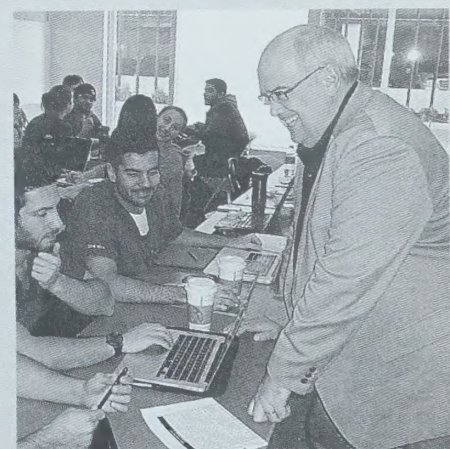
Patterson, an alumnus of the U of A, started his career as a general dentist in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, and later followed his passions into the practice of dental public health and teaching.

He is the father of six children and the oldest of four brothers, who are also U of A alumni. His father was a university professor and dean of education at the U of A and Brigham Young University, and was instrumental in shaping Patterson's vision of teaching and learning.

Patterson's passion for teaching now extends through the eyes of his children, students and colleagues. "My father has been a powerful example for me," says his daughter Melanie. "Not only does he teach me to be a better person, but he helped me to understand the value and importance of education,

which gave me a desire to seek out and complete my own higher educational goals."

In 1994, Patterson began teaching undergraduate students in the doctor of dental surgery, dental hygiene and doctor of medicine programs at the U of A. During this time he discovered his true passion for teaching, and formalized his teaching philosophy, which had been years in the making. This philosophy now guides everything he does related to teaching.



Steve Patterson is the winner of the 2013 Bisco National Dental Teaching Award.

"I made a conscious choice to be a teacher early in my professional career," says Patterson. "I wanted to make an impact on the lives of students and future colleagues."

"I consider Dr. Patterson one of the best educators in Canada and highly deserving of this award from his peers," says Paul Major, professor and chair of the School of Dentistry and senior associate dean of the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry. "He is an innovative and visionary education scholar who has made a major impact at the University of Alberta and beyond."

Patterson will be presented with the award at the 2013 ACFD Biennial Conference June 17 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. ■

Humanities, medicine combine to reveal secrets of scurvy

Michael Brown

In 1850, a group of seven British missionaries set sail for the southern tip of Argentina with hopes of bringing Christianity to the indigenous people of what was then Patagonia.

Unfortunately, the voyage would end in disaster a year later as all seven would eventually succumb to some combination of scurvy and starvation. The ill-fated mission was chalked up as a classic study in poorly planned trips that were doomed from the outset, and for more than 150 years, accounts of the expedition were passed over in favour of outwardly more juicy subject matter.

But now, thanks to a University of Alberta historian and medical questions being raised in the humanities, the group's efforts will not be in vain after all.

Jane Samson, a U of A historian of Victorian exploration, empire and missionary movements, was contacted in 2011 by Jonathan Lamb, who works in the area of 17th- and 18th-century exploration literature at Vanderbilt University.

Lamb had become curious about a neglected dimension of the historical literature on scurvy, namely the evidence of neurological symptoms. He wondered whether historical accounts of these symptoms raised questions about a relationship between vitamin C deficiency and brain chemistry.

With no medical research funding available to pursue a humanities-generated research question, Lamb funded the preliminary medical research out of his humanities research grant, and contacted collaborators abroad, like Samson, to join the project.



Jane Samson

Serendipitously, Samson, while researching another topic, came across the diary of one of the ill-fated missionaries, Richard Williams.

A surgeon and the trip's catechist, Williams documented his battle with scurvy like few in history ever have.

"Williams was concerned with the psychological and neurological side of the story, rather than the well-known stuff about scurvy going back centuries—sailors' accounts of how their gums would swell up and bleed, old wounds would open up and they would suffer from deep bruising," said Samson.

According to his diary, Williams noticed his first symptoms of scurvy in March 1851.

"He talks a lot about his fears of the psychological and spiritual impact of the disease, that it is a debilitating disease and how he is very afraid," said Samson, noting the devout Williams wrote he was often too tired to pray or read the Bible. "He knows about the effect scurvy has on a person's morale or energy levels. He becomes preoccupied

with what was happening to his mind."

Samson says other accounts from sailors suffering from scurvy document how sailors would sit down on the deck, consumed with nostalgia going back to their childhood, and would hallucinate. "Williams' accounts were consumed with the brain and his inability to fulfil his devotion to his religious duties, which was way more important to him than the physical symptoms."

Samson's work helped fill in the fuller picture, and the subsequent medical research helped confirm what Lamb had suspected: vitamin C deficiency changes brain chemistry.

"Preliminary medical research found that vitamin C deficiency produced neurological changes that are related to conditions like depression," said Samson. "The research proved there were brain chemistry changes with implications for the effectiveness of antidepressants in people who are vitamin C deficient."

Samson says this research has far-reaching implications and may yet bear fruit in the areas of effectiveness of antidepressants in the face of the increasingly common problem of vitamin C deficiency.

"More research is needed, of course, and happily this will now be forthcoming," said Samson, whose paper is about to be published as part of this study in the humanities-focused Journal of Maritime Research. "We wanted readers to see how this interdisciplinary group came together around the original research question in such an innovative way."

Samson says she is proud that the U of A played a part in this important international, interdisciplinary discovery and notes that curiosity-driven inquiries—whether in the humanities, the sciences, engineering or medicine—are the lifeblood of innovation and discovery at the U of A.

"The university is a very broad-minded place to work—if you want to talk with someone from another discipline it is quite easy to do that and increasingly so," she said, adding that this research shows questions being asked in the arts are just as important as questions being asked anywhere.

"We need each other, and we need each other to keep asking those curiosity-driven questions, because you can't predict where innovation comes from," she said. ■



A drawing of the Patagonian cavern where the remains of Richard Williams were found.

Artist creates a monument to mending

Bev Betkowski

An artifact-turned-memorial for children who suffered in Canada's residential schools was unveiled at the University of Alberta April 4.

A birchbark canoe and a paddle made of hundreds of commemorative tiles decorated by Alberta schoolchildren were presented to the university through Project of Heart, an interactive, intergenerational art-based initiative that creates Canadian awareness of residential school survivors and acknowledges their healing journeys.

The art installation, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission national commemoration project, brought together the U of A Faculty of Native Studies and Jordan Bennett, the university's first indigenous artist-in-residence, with Project of Heart.

The rough-hewn piece will be installed in the main foyer of Pembina Hall, home of the Faculty of Native Studies, as a monument to the strength of residential school survivors, said Brendan Hokowhitu, dean of native studies.

"This artwork is a representation in terms of their history and in terms of acknowledging that

history. It's a difficult subject, a difficult chapter that tends to be hidden in Canada's past, so this whole project is a healthy recognition of that history," Hokowhitu said.

More than 600 school and community groups Canada-wide have taken part in decorating tiles for art projects across the country. Native Counselling Services of Alberta, which hosts Project of Heart in the province, donated the canoe. The craft was created by a Cree artisan from Northern Alberta.

Placing the artwork at the U of A was important to Project of Heart, said spokesperson Hope Regimbald. "The centre of Project of Heart is reconciliation through education. There's this symbolism of dis-education through residential schools and re-education of Canadians about what happened at those schools. It makes sense for this project to be rooted at the heart of the Faculty of Native Studies in the middle of the U of A campus. This is where the legacy of learning will live on."

The Faculty of Native Studies is proud to house the canoe, which will serve as "an initiation point" for class discussions, Hokowhitu said. "Our faculty is a conduit between the community and academia, and

this project serves as a powerful example of our commitment. This project helps us teach everyone about native history in Canada."

It also brought the opportunity for partnership with the larger community on a quest for awareness. "There's been a lot of positive energy from everyone involved," Hokowhitu said. "The spirit behind the project carried people with it."

Not least of those people was Bennett. He was asked to use the tiles and the canoe to construct a piece of art that would pay homage to the courage of former residential school students and to the loss of children who were taken from their families and forced into the schools.

Overwhelmed with the beauty of the canoe when it was delivered to his campus studio three weeks ago, Bennett was awed by its presence. "There is so much history to this artifact; canoes like this have been built and used for hundreds of years and this is the first time I've seen the real thing; I've only ever seen replicas," he said.

Measuring 11 feet long, sealed with tar and stitched together with plant fibres and moose sinew, the canoe carries a certain dignity. Bennett crafted an epoxy base for it, then engraved the base with the names of the residential schools and the names of 40 Alberta schools whose students decorated the tiles. Each tile is dedicated to a former residential school student, and Bennett used the wooden pieces to build a paddle for the canoe. He also bound some of the tiles with sinew and used them to patch a few holes in the bark. The base was then topped with a clear substance fashioned into waves touched by the paddle.

Set on the base, the canoe points forward into the names of the residential schools, "getting past the pain," and ending with the caring, colourful work of today's children. "It represents a mending process," Bennett said. ■



Jordan Bennett, the U of A's indigenous artist-in-residence, used tiles decorated by Alberta schoolchildren to adorn a birchbark canoe and paddle that will be installed in Pembina Hall as a memorial to Canada's residential school survivors.



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Birds may have inspired the spiritual life of an extinct Aboriginal group

Jamie Hanlon

Digging around historical Aboriginal sites in Newfoundland led a University of Alberta researcher to find clues potentially linking birds to the religious beliefs of a now-extinct First Nations group.

Anthropology doctoral student Todd Kristensen and a colleague originally started searching for remains that would help them understand the dietary habits of the Beothuk. But a discovery of a significant collection of bird bones led them to trace a line between the bone piles and a number of bird-shaped pendants that were also found within burial sites.

"I think it's almost the discovery of a new religion because so little had been known about the Beothuk," says Kristensen.

A collection of pendants representing various bird parts also led the researchers to consider the meaning behind similar bird illustrations. Kristensen suggests that the images, which feature only certain anatomical parts such as wings and webbed feet, may be a

symbolic representation of travel. Pendants with bars engraved would be representative of bones and a connection to death, he says—an assertion supported by similar findings among the remnants of other ancient coastal cultures.

"Bones mean death, flesh means life. When you depict both of them together, it implies a transformation stage," says Kristensen. "It's implying this movement from one world to the next, like death."

Studying the burial remains, located on small islands, the researchers noted several items, including the pendants, that led them to believe the Beothuk would transport their dead ancestors to the island resting place as a sort of departure terminal for the soul.

Kristensen believes that birds played a significant role in Beothuk culture, including the notion that the feathered creatures ferried the spirits of the dead from the island.

"There's the central hypothesis that birds would have carried souls of the dead to the afterlife," he said. "It's an interesting belief that

we hope brings awareness to the diversity of our thought processes,"

"I think it's almost the discovery of a new religion because so little had been known about the Beothuk."

Todd Kristensen

of human cognition."

Kristensen says that outside of Eastern Canada, few Canadians know much about the Beothuk people. He says the stories and history of the country's indigenous peoples in many ways rival the records of human history in the more conventionally popular places such as Europe and the Middle East. As he sees it, it is his role to uncover that history and share his findings with the country and the world.

"I want Canadians to continue to learn about the Beothuk and appreciate who they were." ■



This artist's rendition depicts a Beothuk burial ritual.

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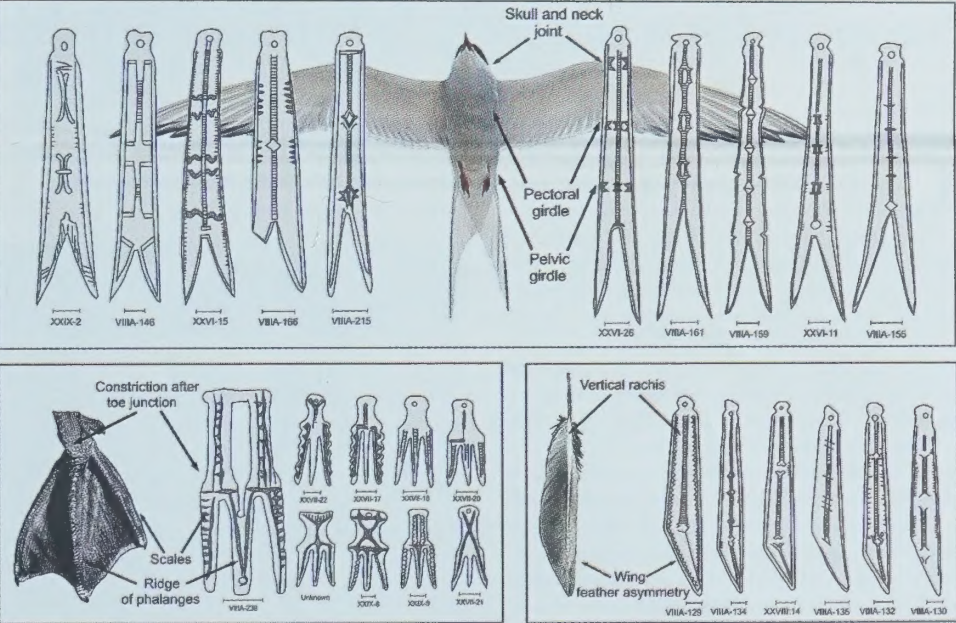
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This illustration shows how pendants found in Beothuk burial sites in Newfoundland resemble physical features of the Arctic tern. U of A researcher Todd Kristensen says the findings suggest the Beothuk believed birds carried the souls of the dead to the afterlife.



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Research reveals best anesthetic methods for hip surgery

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry Staff

Anesthesiologists now have more direction for treating patients who have broken their hip and are undergoing surgery.

In the first study of its kind, researchers and physicians at the University of Alberta's Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry have identified a type of nerve block that best serves patients who have broken their hip and require surgery.

Saifee Rashiq, with the Department of Anesthesiology & Pain Medicine, said that anesthesiologists have long been freezing the nerves of patients just about

to undergo surgery in an effort to improve their recovery and decrease pain after the operation. But there are many types of nerve blocks that can be done, and no literature backing which is best.

That's why Rashiq, along with Donna Dryden and Ben Vandermeer in the U of A Evidence-based Practice Center, decided to do what's called a network meta-analysis of previous studies on the subject to rank the best nerve-block techniques.

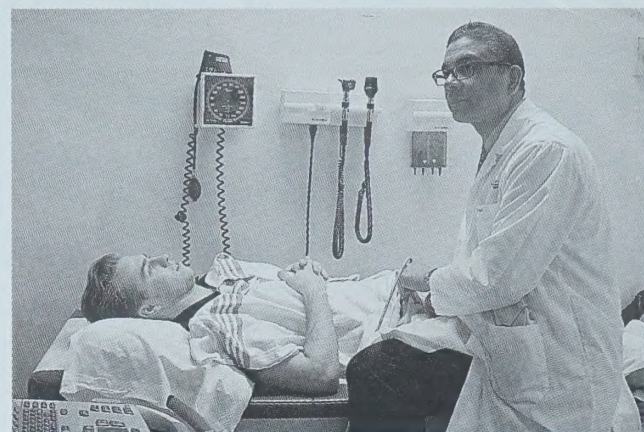
"The concept is very simple: if I say A is better than the standard of care by 10 and B is better than the standard of care by five, then what's the comparison of A and B?"

explains Vandermeer about the network meta-analysis. "We can get all these treatments together, put them in order now from best to worst and approximate how much better each is compared with the others."

"This is important for doctors because some of these nerve blocks are easier to do than others and some are more reliable than others," said Rashiq. "Before you embark on something that's a bit more difficult and more time-consuming, you want to make sure it's actually going to make a difference. In the past people have speculated, well, maybe it's better not to bother doing these because it doesn't make any difference—we've put that to rest."

Two techniques topped the list and both are relatively easy to perform. One emerged as the most likely to reduce post-operative pain, but more important was that the other technique, which takes less than two minutes to perform, reduced the chances of the patient getting delirium, which can be very detrimental to the patient's progress and can sometimes even lead to death.

"One of the problems when you're in severe pain is that we have



Saifee Rashiq led a team that analyzed previous studies to find out what types of "nerve block" treatment best serves patients needing surgery for hip fractures.

to load you up with drugs, and that can cause delirium," said Rashiq. "Elderly sick people can't metabolize the drugs as well as younger healthy people can, so the byproducts of the drugs can cause that."

The group says more research needs to be done, including head-to-head trials to compare the methods against each other. But for now, Rashiq says he wants his colleagues in the anesthesiology community to start using one of the top two methods.

"If everybody used these techniques all the time you could make the business of having your hip fixed a lot less unpleasant," he said. "You could probably prevent a large number of people from having delirium, and I'm sure that would save health-care dollars."

The study, which is published in the *Canadian Journal of Anesthesia*, was funded by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality through its Evidence-based Practice Center Program. ■

Partnering on personalized medicine

Bryan Alary

The University of Alberta's Christopher McCabe and Tania Bubela are leading a new four-year, \$4.6-million project aimed at bringing together the scientists who develop personalized medicine technologies, industry partners, safety regulators and health systems that decide whether to use and pay for the technologies.

McCabe said the big promises of lower costs stemming from tailoring treatments to the individual haven't matched the reality, which includes different expectations from health-care stakeholders.

"Our objective is to show how this can be realigned so that fewer failures make it to late-stage development," said McCabe, Endowed Chair of Emergency Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry.

Personalized, Accessible, Cost-Effective applications of 'Omics technologies, or PACE Omics, received \$2.4 million in funding from Genome Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, via Genome Alberta, on March 26.



Christopher McCabe and Tania Bubela are leading a project aimed at improving research into personalized medicine technologies.

McCabe explained that when scientists and their investors develop new technologies, their research programs are aligned with meeting regulatory approval and not with whether a product is commercially viable or a good value for buyers—usually the health-care system. That misalignment results in wasted investments for technologies that are not good value or do not live up to expectations.

Even when products do successfully make it through research and regulatory hurdles, they are often delayed coming onto the market because they are very expensive, lack proper evidence to prove their worth and, as a result, get bogged down in challenges and appeals.

"If we can reduce the amount of time that's lost in that activity, it's a win for the patients, it's a win for the health systems and it's a win for the investors," McCabe said.

PACE involves an international contingent of researchers, health officials and industry representatives with backgrounds in medicine, health economics, health policy, public advocacy, law and ethics. The team includes U of A researchers from the faculties of medicine and dentistry, law and the School of Public Health.

"There isn't a better university in Canada to launch this type of methods-focused program," said Bubela, a professor in the School of Public Health whose research focuses on intellectual property law and policy for large-scale research collaborations in genomics and stem cell therapies.

"We have the expertise from the clinical perspectives, the legal perspectives, the economics perspective. And we have a history of working collaboratively on all aspects of the innovation system."

PACE Omics is also being funded by Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions, the U of A, McGill University, Genome Quebec, Alberta Health, and other university and in-kind partners, including patient organizations and industry. ■

Support for war may help soldiers' burden

Jamie Hanlon

Can events like Red Fridays, Tickets for Troops and the yellow ribbon campaign reduce the chances of Canadian soldiers experiencing combat-related stress disorders? The authors of a new study from the University of Alberta think so.

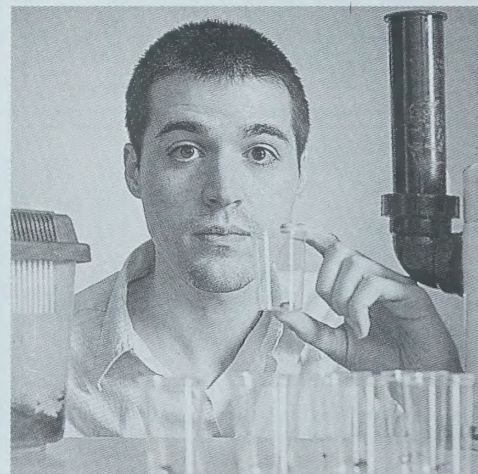
David Webber, a PhD student in the Department of Psychology, and his supervisor Jeff Schimel recently published a paper in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, positing that the level of public support for a war could influence the level of mental distress combatants feel when they arrive home, potentially leading to a heightened risk for developing post-traumatic stress disorder. Webber says the results send a message that policy-makers should choose their battles wisely.

Webber and colleagues designed two studies in which participants were asked to exterminate a number of woodlice using a modified coffee grinder. In one study, they would have to prep another participant, an actor who feigned either interest or disgust at the notion of the task. In the second study, participants were asked to record in a logbook who had actively participated or who had refused to kill the bugs. In both cases, the participants indicated increased levels of guilt and distress when they felt their participation was socially invalidated.

"We did have some participants who showed some clear distress not only when going through the initial act of killing, but also after finding that somebody else had refused to do it," said Webber. "There were some clear physical signs that people were uncomfortable after they found out it was invalidated by other people."

Webber's research points to examples of wars or military actions that were perceived to be popular or unpopular with society, notably the American involvement in the Vietnam War compared with the response to the 9-11 attacks. He says that when there is no clear or rational reason for a country to go to war, the resulting protests over military involvement can act as a catalyst in the minds of returning soldiers and veterans over their role in an action their country sees as unjust or even immoral. Though the act of taking another life in combat can be in some ways rationalized as necessary for the good of one's country, when that country's citizens openly manifest their rejection of the war, the soldiers' perception that their actions were out of line with social reality, and thus immoral, may become detrimental to their mental health.

"Soldiers, while they're in the military, may believe that killing is the right thing to do. But maybe when they return home and see the culture and the country is not as supportive as they thought it once was, it makes it more distressing," he says.



David Webber has determined that the level of public support for war could influence the level of mental distress soldiers feel.

Webber says leaders need to act wisely and judiciously when deciding to go to war with other countries. Although soldiers accept the inherent risks involved with their careers, there is no training given that will help them face the backlash of public opinion against their role in the government's choice to do battle. Even though citizens may support the soldiers, and may sign petitions and stage demonstrations with the intent of bringing them back home safely, Webber says being caught between duty and public opinion can be a painful experience.

Webber acknowledges that there is not necessarily an ideal prescription for when to go to war, but he says for the sake of the troops' mental health, signing that declaration needs to be done with the utmost thought and care.

"When decisions are made to go to war, they should be based less on fear and insecurity and more in hard realities, such as if the country has been attacked," said Webber.

"If the decisions are undertaken with good reason, with legitimate evidence behind them, protests should be less likely and invalidation should be less of a problem." ■

Inclusive early learning settings needed for special needs kids

Bryan Alary

Lesley Wiart was the lead author of a new study that identified challenges in providing inclusive spaces for children with physical disabilities, cognitive impairments and behavioural issues. The research showed that many Alberta child-care centres and day homes support inclusion but sometimes lack training and support.

"Even though providers overwhelmingly have positive attitudes about inclusion, they still experience some barriers to including kids with disabilities in their programs," said Wiart, an assistant clinical professor in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine.

Wiart surveyed 318 child-care centres and 25 day homes in Alberta for her study, which

showed that 91 per cent of centre-based programs had provided inclusive care in the previous two years. The most inclusive programs typically featured more training for staff who knew how to get access to specialized support services, had higher staff-to-children ratios and were physically accessible.

However, the study also showed that 36 per cent of centres and 29 per cent of day homes had turned away children with special needs because programs were at capacity, the child required more attention than staffing levels could accommodate, staff had inadequate training or the space was physically unsuitable.

The survey showed that most centres and day homes—60 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively—had used specialized support services for children with special needs;

however, more than a third—36 per cent of centres and 40 per cent of day homes—were unaware of how to do so.

Wiart, a pediatric physical therapist who conducted this research as her post-doctoral project in the Faculty of Nursing, says the aim of this research was to identify the issues that can inform policy and service delivery to support inclusion for children with disabilities in early learning and care settings.

"There is a definite need for targeted training and support for staff at child-care centres around inclusion practices."

Wiart's research influenced a new pilot program offered by Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT), which receives funding to support inclusion of children in care settings.

With funding from Alberta Education, the not-for-profit created a program called Access, Supports and Participation (ASaP) that models a continuum of supports and services for inclusion in child-care settings.

The ASaP pilot is currently being offered at five care centres in Edmonton, including the MacEwan Child Care Centre.

Before her enrolment at MacEwan, Christy Raymond-Seniuk's daughter Sydney struggled with obsessive-compulsive disorder and separation anxiety—issues that were initially recognized

with help from qualified staff at the centre, she said.

Raymond-Seniuk said Sydney qualified for funding through GRIT for a part-time aide five days a week, along with consultations from specialists like occupational therapists. Without it, the MacEwan nursing instructor and PhD student likely would have been forced to stay at home.

"Once we put supports in place, it was just amazing to see the changes," she said. "My child became part of a group and interacted with the rest of the children, which you always wish for as a parent."

Wiart's research was funded by the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research. It was published in March in the peer-reviewed *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. ■

Banning food ads targeted at kids

Bryan Alary

Researchers from the University of Alberta are leading a charge among Canada's obesity experts and calling on the federal government to ban food and beverage ads that target children.

Kim Raine, a professor with the Centre for Health Promotion Studies in the School of Public Health, says governments need to take action to stem the rising obesity epidemic. The only exception to a proposed food and beverage marketing ban would be for approved public health campaigns that promote healthy eating.

"Restricting marketing is not going to be a cure for childhood obesity, but it's one step in a multi-pronged approach to creating an environment where the healthy choice is the easy choice," said Raine, lead author of new consensus recommendations calling for the ban.

"Right now, it's the flashy, highly marketed, 'fun,' high-sugar and high-fat foods that are the easy choice. Kids see them and want them, and parents' efforts to encourage their kids to eat a healthy diet are undermined."

The recommendations were developed by leading Canadian and international obesity experts at an obesity conference held in Montreal in 2011. They were published in February in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Public Health Policy*, in an early online release.



Kim Raine is lead author of recommendations by a panel of obesity experts calling for the Canadian government to ban food and beverage ads that target children.

More than five million Canadians are considered obese, including 500,000 children, and the number of kids who are overweight or obese has more than doubled since the early 1980s.

That's a trend Raine says cannot continue without overloading the health-care system—80 per cent of costs are associated with obesity-related chronic diseases such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure and certain cancers. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, she said, meaning the rates of these preventable chronic diseases are only going to rise.

"Without investing in strong prevention efforts, like the proposed ban, the health system is not sustainable," she said.

Raine and the consensus panel said there are important lessons to be drawn from the ban on tobacco advertising to minors, which has helped cut smoking rates. The rest of the country can also learn from Quebec, which since 1980 has banned all marketing to children under 13 years old—legislation that withstood a Supreme Court challenge in 1989.

The panel, which also included U of A researchers Timothy Caulfield and John Spence, is also calling on government to create a regulatory body that would ensure children are protected from exposure to food ads. The body would be required to create minimum standards for food marketing, monitor companies for compliance and impose penalties when necessary.

Though some may view marketing bans as a heavy-handed approach, Raine notes the food industry has deep pockets that governments and public health advocates cannot come close to matching. Food advertisements appear not only on TV and in schools, but also on the Internet; in video games; through sponsorships, product placements, emails and brand mascots; and even through viral marketing.

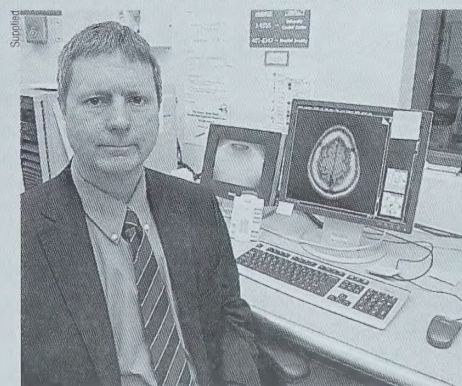
"It really is about trying to set a more level playing field because the healthy choices aren't being promoted well. They're getting buried, they're getting lost in an ocean of flashy marketing."

The panel's work was funded by a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. ■

Study shows lower-back MRIs often unnecessary

Raquel Maurier

More than half of lower-back MRIs ordered at two Canadian hospitals were inappropriate or of questionable value for patients—and family doctors were more apt than other specialists to order these unnecessary tests, according to newly published medical research from Alberta and Ontario teams.



Derek Emery

The study, led by University of Alberta neuroradiology researcher Derek Emery in collaboration with colleagues from across Canada, showed that more than 50 per cent of the lumbar spine or lower-back MRIs had questionable value or were deemed inappropriate.

The findings are important because in some parts of the country, MRI tests for the lower back account for about one-third of all MRI requests. Across the country, wait times for MRIs are long and patient access is limited.

"MRI is a limited resource in Alberta, so if the number of inappropriate MRIs can be reduced, there will be more capacity to perform MRIs on

patients who really need them," said Emery. "This is all about improving patient care, imaging those patients who will benefit and not imaging those who will not."

In the study, about 34 per cent of those tests ordered by family doctors were considered appropriate. MRIs ordered by neurologists and orthopedic surgeons had value in less than 50 per cent of the cases examined. Neurosurgeons had a higher rate of pegging a test's value, at 75 per cent.

These findings demonstrate that doctors may need to be better educated about when it's appropriate to order an MRI, Emery says. "I think we need to provide better tools to doctors to help them determine when imaging of the lower back is likely to help," said Emery, an associate professor in the departments of radiology and diagnostic imaging, and biomedical engineering.

A total of 2,000 MRI imaging requests of the lower back and head were reviewed.

Interestingly, Emery says, the study showed that requests for head MRIs in patients with headaches were appropriate 83 per cent of the time.

"The results tell us that we should not assume there is overuse in any given area without measuring," he said. "We were surprised by the results about head MRIs—we thought the rate of inappropriate use would have been much higher, but the results showed otherwise."

The researchers used best evidence and expert opinion to determine whether the scans were appropriate. MRIs for the back are usually done to determine the cause of back pain; head MRIs in this study were done to identify the cause of headaches.

"It is important to note that we did not measure underuse of MRIs," said Emery. "There are many patients who would benefit from MRIs who are not being imaged due to lack of access."

The research was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. ■

news [shorts]

folio presents a sample of some of the stories that recently appeared on the ualberta.ca/news/page. To read more, go to www.news.ualberta.ca.

Green thumbs wanted for adopt-a-flower program

The university's Adopt-a-Flower program is again looking for campus green thumbs to look after the more than 130 planters and another 15 planting beds on campus.

The program was started in 2003 in response to the Senate Task Force Report on Wellness, which pushed more involvement in wellness initiatives on campus.

Planters take about an hour of work a day, but that can easily be split between multiple people from a faculty or department. Volunteers will have access to the wisdom of F&O staffers about choosing the proper plants and running through procedures such as watering and dead heading. For more information about the Adopt-a-Flower program, visit virtualwellness.ualberta.ca or contact Sarah Flower at sarah.flower@ualberta.ca or 780-492-2249.

Awards for faculty excellence

The provost and vice-president (academic) invites nominations for the 2013 University Cup and Vargo Teaching Chair.

The University Cup is the highest honour the U of A can bestow on a member of its academic staff and is granted only to those individuals who have achieved outstanding distinction in each of the areas of scholarly research, teaching, and service to the university and the community at large.

Any full-time member of the academic teaching staff with 20 years of service as a faculty member in a university community and at least 10 years of service as a faculty member at the U of A may apply. Nominations may be submitted by current or past students, faculty members, deans or chairs.

Vargo Teaching Chairs have been created to foster excellence in teaching. This program is committed to supporting individuals demonstrating innovative and creative teaching methods that enhance learning by undergraduate and graduate students.

Any full-time associate professor or full professor may be appointed as a Vargo Chair. Submissions must be forwarded by a department or faculty and have the support of the dean of the faculty.

For complete regulations, go to policiesonline.ualberta.ca and search the particular award. The deadline to submit nominations is May 1 at 4 p.m. Nomination packages are to be submitted to the Academic Awards and Ceremonies Office, Office of the Registrar, 1-27 South Academic Building.

Agronomic trial doubles yield in India

Tina Harms, a soil science grad student, spent seven months last year in Kolli Hills, India, where research into intercropping and fertility treatments is paying off for local famers.

A series of four plots were seeded side by side, one with cassava (also known as tapioca) only, another with cassava intercropped with millet, a third with cassava intercropped with millet and beans, and a fourth that had cassava intercropped with beans only.

Different fertility treatments were then applied to the plots—namely synthetic fertilizer, farmyard manure, or farmyard manure with fertilizer. Another plot had no fertility treatment, acting as the control plot.

"We found a great increase in the amount of cassava harvested from the sites with the farmyard manure plus fertilizer," said Harms, who harvested the first season's crops and planted the second season's. "It was almost double that of the controlled plots."

As far as intercrop growth, Harms found that when cassava was intercropped with both millet and beans, it had the highest overall yield.

Harms' various research plots were interspersed among land owned by local farmers in three villages in the area. She worked directly with people in the villages and noticed when she planted the second season's crops that other farmers in the area intercropped beans with their cassava.

"I think farmers adopted that one because it was the easiest technology to adopt, the least expensive and the least labour-intensive," said Harms, who explained that synthetic fertilizer wasn't necessarily easy or cheap to come by in the area.

The project was part of the \$4.9-million International Development Research Centre-sponsored Alleviating Poverty and Malnutrition project the U of A is conducting in partnership with the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation.

The Great Chemical Roundup was great

The numbers are in from Environment, Health and Safety's Great Chemical Roundup, which has helped faculties and researchers clear out the chemical junk from more than 200 labs and storage spaces since it began in late 2012.

All told, EHS collected more than 8,000 items that included 3,000 kilograms of solid material, 3,500 litres of liquids and 76 lecture bottles. Also collected were items that had been gathering dust since the 1950s, chemicals in sealed tubes that haven't even been identified yet and entire shelves that nobody even remembers filling.

U of A vocal vibrator video goes viral

Geoff McMaster

There's no denying the story's sex appeal. University of Alberta drama professor David Ley discovered that a simple hand-held vibrator—the love-shop variety—could be used to improve vocal range and power for singers, actors, teachers or anyone who places a heavy demand on their voice.



David Ley demonstrates how to improve vocal power, range and tone using a hand-held vibrator.

Ley's discovery, recently featured in the U of A's What's Next public awareness campaign, soon took off on YouTube and in the media. At last count, it had more than 160,000 views, compared with only a few thousand two weeks earlier. The story was also appearing in media around the world, including the *Guardian* and *Daily Mail* in the United Kingdom, and *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, the *Huffington Post* and even *Playboy Radio* in the United States.

Late-night host Jay Leno mentioned the vibrator in his *Tonight Show* monologue March 26, and Ley will soon appear as the lead story on the CBS television show *The Doctors*, with audiences in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, Ireland, Sweden and Finland.

"I've gotten emails from around the world," he says. "Romania, Australia, England, the U.S. I even Skyped with a speech pathologist in Singapore."

By and large, those who have approached Ley take the vibrator seriously and are looking for instruction on how to use it for the purpose Ley has in mind—to relax muscles around the vocal folds and to locate optimal points of vocal resonance on the head and neck.

At the same time, however, the story has taken on a life of its own. For much of the media, says Ley, "you have to negotiate around the sex-toy thing, because you know that's their way in. They keep trying to steer it into a joke, but I've mostly been able to get beyond that."

"But to stay true to myself, I have to remember that I came up with this to help someone, and that's really what lies at the heart of this story."

David Ley

Most frustrating, he says, are the media outlets that run the story second-hand without talking to him, or that use it on the most dumbed-down of all media—morning radio.

"Now it's getting stupid—everybody's ripping everybody off. It's getting three or four times removed and evolving into something else. It's like that game where a story goes around a circle, and by the time it gets to the end the fish gets a whole lot bigger, or turns into, God knows what, a dinosaur."

Producers at *The Doctors*, however, are not the least bit interested in the salacious sex-toy angle, says Ley. They want to see how the vibrator works on the voice, and are sending him a laptop-like device with a camera so Ley can perform a demonstration remotely.

After that he heads to Philadelphia to conduct a workshop at the international symposium of the Voice Foundation. "What was going to be me doing my little dog-and-pony show is going to turn into a standing-room-only event," he says. "I've had requests to attend from people who aren't even part of the foundation."

"It's fascinating to be at the centre of a social media phenomenon, and I have a lot of people telling me what I should do [to benefit personally from the discovery]. But to stay true to myself, I have to remember that I came up with this to help someone, and that's really what lies at the heart of this story."

The video of David Ley, and other U of A researchers featured in the What's Next campaign, can be viewed at whatsnext.ualberta.ca. ■

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Chemistry professor recognized for prize-winning paper

Brian Murphy

A University of Alberta chemistry professor's research paper outshone 1,300 other submissions to earn the 2013 Outstanding Author of the Year award by the prestigious *Journal of Organic Chemistry* published by the American Chemical Society, the largest chemical society in the world.

Dennis Hall and his U of A team won kudos for a research paper detailing a new, greener and safer way to produce amides, a class of compounds vital for the manufacture of everyday items ranging from prescription drugs to shampoo.

Hall says the team developed a catalytic process so simple that even an inexperienced undergraduate



Dennis Hall and his team won an award for their research paper detailing a greener and safer way to produce compounds used to manufacture items from prescription drugs to shampoo.

chemistry student could use it to produce amides.

"Our process is also more sustainable than existing alternatives," said Hall. "It does not require expensive, complicated and

potentially toxic reagents. It occurs at ambient temperature, and the only byproduct of our catalytic process is water."

Hall credits the U of A's commitment to fundamental or

curiosity-based research for enabling his team to produce a simplified, safe process for producing a widely used class of chemical compounds using a new mechanism.

"Funding agencies place an increasing emphasis on applied research or focused research for a specific end use," said Hall. "But people have to realize that fundamental or curiosity-based research can have long-term payoffs. Plastic, computers and cellphones—technologies we take for granted—are the result of fundamental scientific research. No one knew at the time where that research would lead to, and it changed the lives of everyone on this planet."

The U of A team's catalytic process for amides has long been on the radar of GreenCentre Canada, a federal agency tasked with helping

university researchers and industry produce sustainable chemicals and environmentally friendly products. It was recently announced that GreenCentre, with the help of TEC Edmonton, has licensed the catalytic process.

"The U of A's relationship with GreenCentre will help us with further refinement of our catalytic process and help us get it out to companies that can use it," said Hall.

The Journal of Organic Chemistry Outstanding Author Award comes with a \$3,000 prize. Hall was quick to share the accomplishment with his two co-authors, post-doctoral fellow Nicolas Gernigon and PhD student Raed Al-Zoubi. ■

talks & events

Talks & Events listings do not accept submissions via fax, mail, email or phone. Please enter events you'd like to appear in folio and at www.news.ualberta.ca/events. A more comprehensive list of events is available online at www.events.ualberta.ca. Deadline: noon one week prior to publication. Entries will be edited for style and length.

UNTIL JUNE 29

U of A Museums present SIZE MATTERS: Big Prints From Around the World. From miniature to monolithic, artists have been playing with scale for thousands of years. SIZE MATTERS features the work of contemporary printmakers—working in media as diverse as woodcuts and digital prints on fabric—from Canada, the United States, Finland, Japan and beyond, who all have one thing in common: they like to think big. Enterprise Square.

UNTIL MAY 31

Miriam Green Ellis, Champion of the West. This exhibition introduces the work of pioneer woman journalist of Western Canada, Miriam Green Ellis (1879-1964). Through a sampling of the rich diversity of the collection of published newspaper articles, photographs, coloured glass slides, manuscripts, diaries and letters she bequeathed to the University of Alberta, the exhibition invites you to see the way we were as Westerners almost a century ago. Bruce Peel Special Collections Library, Rutherford South.

UNTIL MAY 1

Call for Nominations: University Cup and Vargo Teaching Chair. Detailed criteria for these awards can be found at policiesonline.ualberta.ca. Nominations due 4 p.m. May 1 at 1-27 South Academic Building. For more information contact Laura at laura.connell@ualberta.ca.

UNTIL APRIL 30

Occupy the Gallery. This exhibition is a place where students from the modern languages and cultural studies department use art to do social science research. Lower level, AGA Ledcor Theatre Foyer.

UNTIL APRIL 25

U of A Museums present Passion Project. This U of A Museums exhibition features 75 works from the U of A Art Collection, most of which have not yet been exhibited on campus. Passion Project tells the story of how the university has developed an outstanding art collection, shaped by the personal passion and collective vision of donors, artists, curators and community members. Enterprise Square.

UNTIL APRIL 13

On the Line: Bachelor of Design Graduate Exhibition 2013. This exhibition is the final visual presentation for the bachelor of design degree. 1-1 FAB Gallery.

UNTIL APRIL 6

U of A Studio Theatre's Saint Joan by George Bernard Shaw. The play Saint Joan is based on the life and trial of Joan of Arc. Directed by Micheline Chevrier, the piece has no villains. Crime, like disease, is not interesting: it is something to be done away with by general consent, and that is all [there is] about it. It is what men do at their best, with good intentions, and what normal men and women find that they must and will do in spite of their intentions, that really concern us. Timms Centre for the Arts.

APRIL 5, 10 & 12

Centre for Teaching and Learning Programs. Moodle Training, TLS Concepts, Peer Assessment and Course Design. The Centre for Teaching and Learning hosts a number of hands-on sessions to introduce Moodle features and course development to instructors. ctl.ualberta.ca.

APRIL 6 & 18

Staging Diversity 2013 Artist-in-Residence Workshop Series. Artist-in-residence for Winter

2013 and MFA candidate Nikki Shafieeullah is a theatre facilitator who has led arts-based community projects across Canada and internationally. Staging Diversity, a participatory, theatre-based research project, employs a variety of theatre-based methodologies to explore social location, with a focus on ancestral histories and cross-cultural myths, folk tales and legends. 4-104 Education North.

APRIL 6

69th Annual Mixed Chorus Spring Concert. The concert will feature the Mixed Chorus and the Faculty of Education Handbell Ringers. Tickets will be available through the Winspear Box Office. 8-10 p.m. Winspear Centre.

APRIL 7

Mozart: Grand Mass in C-minor. The Augustana Choir, the Madrigal Singers, the Concert Choir and the U of A Symphony Orchestra will perform one of Mozart's finest choral masterpieces, the Grand Mass in C-minor for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. Tickets available at the door. 8-10 p.m. Winspear Centre.

APRIL 8

Noon Music – Instrumental. Noon –1 p.m. Convocation Hall.

Centennial Lectures. Jack Jhamandas and Jacqueline Hebert present Restoring Memory and Movement: Neuroscience Research on Alzheimer's Disease and Advanced Prosthetic Limbs. 5-7 p.m. Allard Family Lecture Theatre, Katz Group Centre.

APRIL 10

Educated Luncheon – Fact or Fiction: Exercise can cure cancer. Kerry Courneya, Canada Research Chair in Physical Activity and Cancer, will speak about the role of physical activity in cancer prevention, as well as its ability to help patients during treatment and into recovery, and in reducing the risk of relapse. \$10 (includes lunch). Noon–1 p.m. Enterprise Square.

CSLebration! This event is designed to recognize and celebrate the contributions made by the many community partners, students and instructors who make community service-learning possible. 4-6 p.m. 236/238 TELUS Centre.

Vocal Jury-Recital. This performance will be put on by Augustana students from the studios of Charlene Brown and Joy-Anne Murphy, with Carolyn Olson, piano. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Augustana Chapel, Camrose.

APRIL 11

Department of Political Science and China Institute's Winter 2013 Speakers Series. Political

scientist Chris Roberts will give a talk entitled *Silent Adversaries and Serendipitous Collaborators: Sino-Canadian Engagement in Africa Since the Independence Era*. 3:30-5 p.m. 1-107 Tory.

Bacon's Promise. Janet Kourany, philosophy professor at the University of Notre Dame, will be on hand to give this lecture on 16th-century philosopher Francis Bacon's contention that knowledge would "establish and extend the power and dominion of the human race over the universe." Now, centuries later, has the promise been kept? This talk will consider areas in which Bacon's promise remains largely unfulfilled, some of the factors that have led to this result and some of the responses that these factors have elicited. And it will argue for a different kind of response that has yet to be tried. 3:30-5:30 p.m. 239 CAB.

APRIL 12

Arts Celebrates: An evening of modern and traditional Aboriginal music and dance. 6:30-9:30 p.m. PCL Lounge, CCIS.

Book Launch. Linda Goyette will launch her latest book "Disinherited Generations: Our Struggle to Reclaim Treaty Rights for First Nations Women and Their Descendants." 7-9:30 p.m. Provincial Archives of Alberta.

Around the World. Sangkor, the Augustana Women's Choir, invites you to join them for a concert of music inspired by cultures from around the world. Tickets available at the door. 7-9 p.m. Augustana Chapel, Camrose.

APRIL 15

Epic Fails: Learning From Our Teaching Mistakes. The Centre for Teaching and Learning is presenting a monthly series of conversations with U of A teaching award winners on their trials and triumphs in teaching. The discussion will be hosted by Toni Samek (library and information studies) and features Olenka Bilash (secondary education), David Kahane (political science) and Charles Lucy (chemistry). All four are winners of the national 3M Teaching Fellowship. 2:30-3:30 p.m. 190 ECHA.

Annual Public Lecture in Philosophy. Jeff Pelletier will give a lecture entitled *Does Reality Track Language? Does Language Track Reality?* 3:30-5:30 p.m. B2 Computing Science Centre.

APRIL 16

Annual Henry Kreisel Memorial Lecture. Esi Edugyan will deliver the seventh edition of this annual lecture with a talk entitled *Don't Turn Back: Observations on Home*. 7:30-10 p.m. Timms Centre for the Arts.

laurels

Marcello Tonelli, professor in the Division of Nephrology, received a Top Canadian Achievements in Health Research Award from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Canadian Medical Association Journal for his work on improving treatments for hypertension, diabetes, chronic kidney disease and vascular disease.

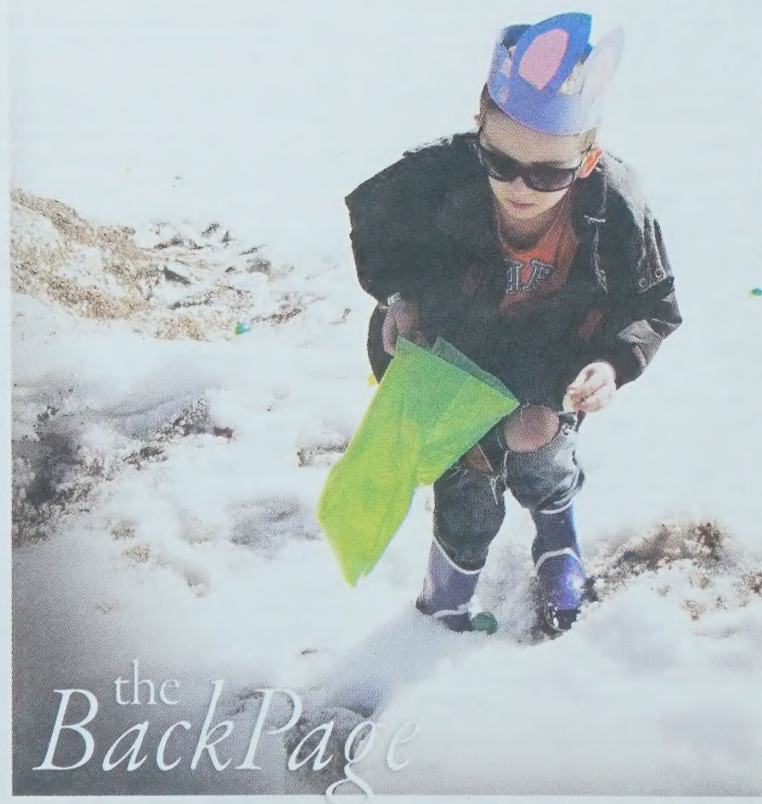
Pink Elephant, the world's number 1 supplier of information technology (IT) service management and IT infrastructure library education, awarded Trevor Woods and his entire Academic Information and Communication Technologies (AICT) team its Project of the Year award at its annual conference Feb. 17-20. The U of A entry won for its rapid implementation of its IT infrastructure library, which is a control framework for detailed IT governance that is favoured by IT auditors.

EASTER BOUNTY



Photos by Selena Phillips-Boyle

On March 30, nearly 300 eager eggers went in search of 3,700 eggs left behind by the Easter Bunny all over the University of Alberta's north campus as part of the Alumni Association's annual Easter Eggstravaganza.



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